

# Healthy Kansans living in safe and sustainable environments



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND ENVIRONMENT

*2006 Annual Report*  
*[www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov)*



*Photo by Steve Mulligan*

# DEAR FELLOW KANSANS

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE) mission is to protect the health and environment of all Kansans by promoting responsible choices. This is a mission we take very seriously and one that challenges us every day. As we begin a new year, and a new set of challenges and opportunities, I would like to provide you this annual report with the hope that it will give you more insight into our agency, our recent and ongoing initiatives, a look back at our recent accomplishments and a peek ahead of the year to come.

## Notable 2006 Agency Accomplishments

Kansas was recognized as one of the states with the highest overall health improvement in 2006 by the United Health Foundation's national study. According to the study, Kansas experienced the fourth highest overall health improvement in the nation from 2005 to 2006. Kansas moved up six places in this year's report to 17<sup>th</sup> place overall.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in Kansas and the nation. Statewide efforts have driven a 2 percent decrease in the adult smoking rate to an all-time low of 17.8 percent. Kansas improved from 11<sup>th</sup> nationally in last year's ranking to sixth this year.

Raising childhood immunization rates has been an important goal. Kansas made its most dramatic improvement in 2006, moving from 43<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> nationally after four years of steady improvement. Implementing the recommendations of the Governor's 2004 Blue Ribbon Panel, including advancing immunization schedules, linking immunization to WIC services and providing parental incentives resulted in this improvement. Immunization rates will increase and be sustained through the statewide KSWEBIZ immunization registry, expansion of current efforts and the Immunize Kansas Kids Project, a unique partnership between KDHE, the Kansas Health Foundation, the Kansas Health Institute and dozens of participating organizations.

Preparing for pandemic flu, bioterrorism and natural disasters continues to be a major priority. Kansas met nine out of 10 preparedness criteria and ranked second in the nation in the Trust for America's Health annual report on public health preparedness.

Meth Watch, the first national effort aimed at curbing the spread of methamphetamines, was started by KDHE as a public-private partnership between law enforcement, state officials and the retail community. The program is designed to help curtail the suspicious sale and theft of common household products used in the illicit manufacturing of methamphetamine. We offer the use of our trademarked Meth Watch logo and its program to any interested non-profit, governmental or for-profit organizations. We hold 34 trademark agreements with 28 states, national and state non-profit organizations and Canada.

KDHE continued the *Get Caught Recycling* campaign in 2006 to encourage Kansans to recycle. Famous Kansans, including former Governor Mike Hayden, basketball stars Wayne Simien and Kendra Wecker, TV personality Bill Kurtis, artist Stan Herd, Senator Sam

Brownback and State Treasurer Lynn Jenkins were all "caught" in the act of recycling and featured in our statewide campaign.

## Kansas Center for Health Disparities

The total racial/ethnic population of Kansas today is 17.2 percent. The overall number of racial/ethnic Kansans doubled from 223,637 in 1980 to 454,421 in 2000. Data regarding racial/ethnic and tribal population health disparities is very limited. This includes data shortfalls with disease-specific health disparities for racial/ethnic and tribal populations for cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, immunizations, cardiovascular disease, maternal and child health and mental health.

The Kansas Center for Health Disparities, formerly known as the Office of Minority Health, was named by an advisory committee that first met in September 2005. The ongoing roles of the committee will be to assist in the determination of key priorities and initiatives for the center and to affirm a policy framework that guides the activity of the center.

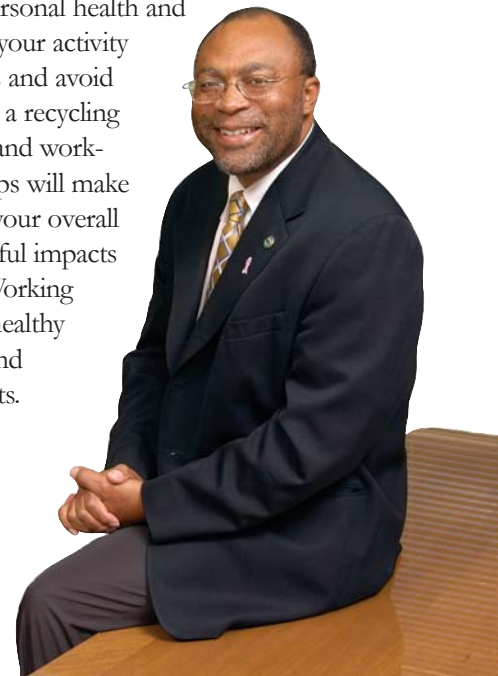
The center is charged with eliminating health disparities for racial, ethnic and tribal populations through health planning and policy development; health promotion and disease prevention; building cultural competency; and education, training and technical assistance.

Over the past year, the center has been very active building community and faith-based state and federal partnerships and collaborations to help raise awareness about health disparities in Kansas. Just a few of those activities include collaborating with the Urban League of the MidPlains to host a Martin Luther King Jr. community-wide breakfast and a legislative awareness session on the impact of health disparities, both of which featured Dr. David Williams of the University of Michigan. The center also hosted the annual Health Disparities Conference, "Healthy Cultures, Healthy Kansas" in April.

## Looking Forward

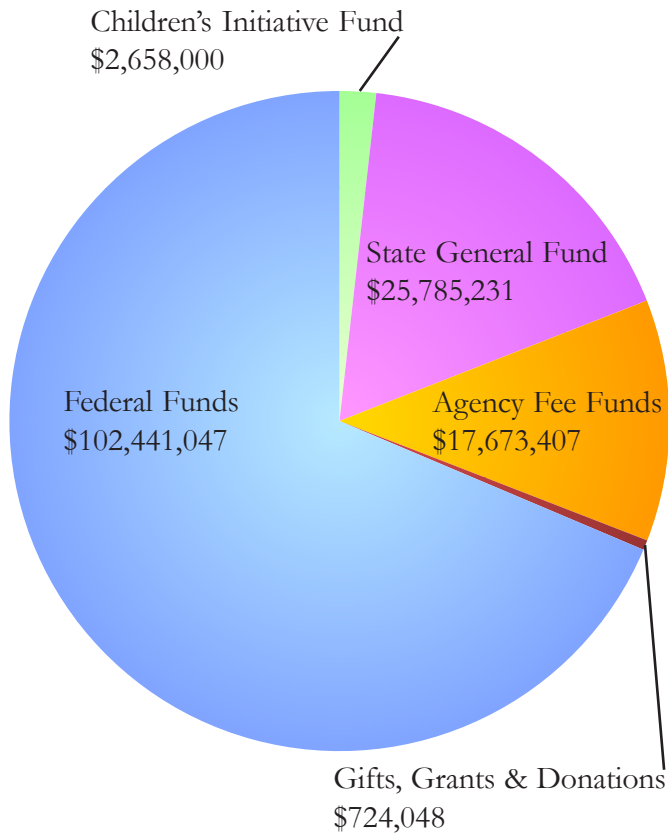
I encourage each of you to make responsible choices in your life that will protect your personal health and environment. Increase your activity level, eat healthier foods and avoid tobacco products. Start a recycling program at your home and work-place. These simple steps will make a significant impact on your overall health and reduce harmful impacts on our environment. Working together, we can all be healthy Kansans living in safe and sustainable environments.

Be well,

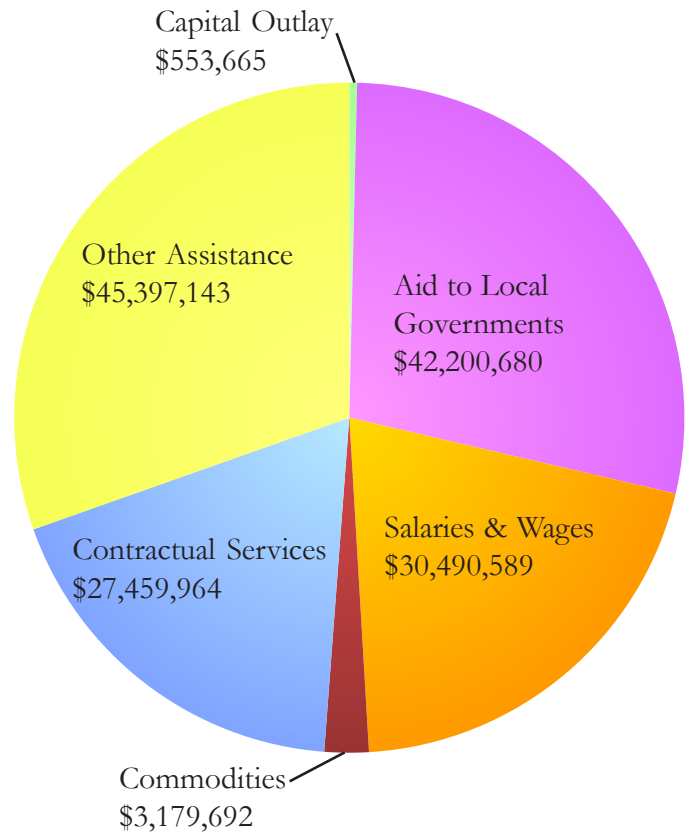


# FY 2008 BUDGET

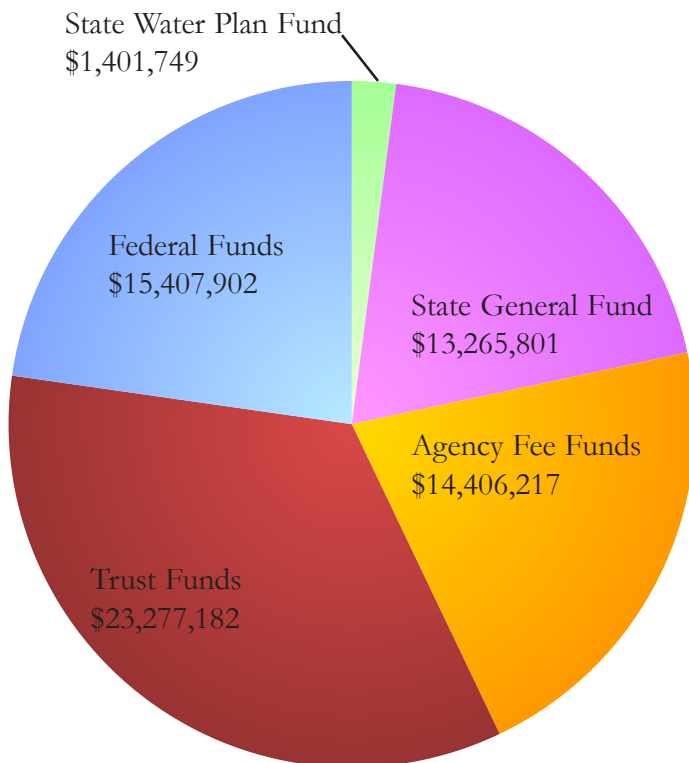
## FY 2008 Health Funding by Source



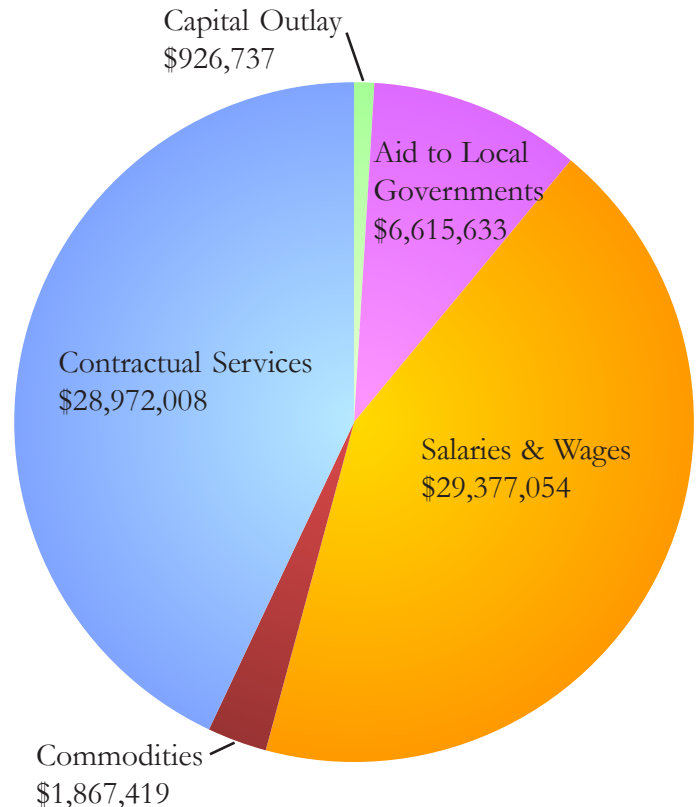
## FY 2008 Health Expenditures by Type



## FY 2008 Environment Funding by Source



## FY 2008 Environment Expenditures by Type







It's my distinct pleasure to serve as the Director of Health and State Health Officer for Kansas. Thank you for joining us as we celebrate our success.

The past year has been a good one for health in Kansas. In nationwide rankings, Kansas is one of the healthiest states in the nation. Much of this results from a continuing decrease in the number of Kansans who smoke and progressive communities passing clean indoor air ordinances. Children benefit from new laws promoting automotive safety and from efforts that raised our immunization rates from 43<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

KDHE staff continues to work in preparation for emergencies such as pandemic influenza. Kansas was recognized by the Trust for America's Health as second in the nation in our readiness.

Our preparedness efforts were tested this spring when Kansas was involved in a nationwide outbreak of mumps. Thanks to the dedication of our staff at KDHE and those public health workers in all corners of the state, Kansas was successful in controlling the outbreak. Our success "on the ground" gave us the opportunity to lead in researching the causes of the outbreak, helping all of us to learn more about viruses and vaccines.

These highlights are only small portions of what we've achieved over the past year. Please take a moment to review our many accomplishments, and realize that these are only the most visible part of what we do. It's my honor to work with hundreds of professionals at KDHE, and thousands statewide, who strive every day to improve our health. Together, we can all enjoy a Healthy Kansas.

**- Dr. Howard Rodenberg  
Director, Division of Health**

# Division of Health

The Division of Health is charged with promoting health and preventing illness and injury among the people of Kansas. The division covers aspects of health ranging from ensuring restaurant safety to preparing for pandemic flu. We also work closely with local health departments to ensure statewide public health protection.

2006 was another rewarding year for health in our state. Kansas immunization rates increased for the fourth straight year, rising from 43<sup>rd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation. Both the KSWebIZ immunization registry system and the Immunize Kansas Kids Project will help maintain these advances.

Preparing for pandemic flu, bioterrorism and natural disasters continues to be one of our top priorities. Kansas ranked second in the nation on the Trust for America's Health annual report on health preparedness. In August, we partnered with local health departments, hospitals and other organizations to conduct the state's first full-scale exercise of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), a federal cache of medical supplies available to states upon request. The exercise tested the state's ability to request, store and ship medicines and supplies from the SNS to local communities.

The Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology (OSE) was created this year. The office is charged with tracking reportable infectious diseases and investigating disease clusters and outbreaks. OSE was responsible for the investigation, follow-up and recommendations for containment of a large, multi-state mumps outbreak that infected more than 900 Kansans this spring.

Access to trauma care services continues to be a challenge for some Kansans, especially in rural areas. In 2006, we provided trauma education to more than 800 healthcare professionals and increased the verified trauma centers in Kansas to six, an all-time high.

Promoting healthy lifestyles is another focus area. Last year, we facilitated development of Healthy Kansans 2010, a consensus of priorities for improving the

health of Kansans. Through this initiative, we hope to increase the quality of life and eliminate health disparities within our population.

Tobacco use remains the number one preventable cause of death in Kansas. The Kansas Tobacco Quitline (1-866-KAN-STOP) provided assistance to more than 2,700 Kansans this year. We assisted school districts and local health agencies to implement programs to prevent tobacco use and promote physical activity and nutrition.

We work with communities, schools, health professionals and local health departments to improve oral health in Kansas. In 2006, the Professional Outreach Project educated pediatric medical professionals on the importance of providing oral health preventative services in medical offices to prevent early childhood tooth decay. We also hired a new Oral Health Director in 2006.

We are entrusted with ensuring the safety of Kansans by licensing and enforcing standards at childcare facilities, restaurants, lodging facilities and healthcare facilities. In 2006, we issued more than 16,000 childcare certificates and licensed almost 900 health care facilities. We provided licensing and oversight for more than 10,000 food service establishments and 780 lodging facilities, while conducting almost 17,000 food service inspections. We also provided training to more than 9,000 food workers and conducted 2,600 orientation sessions for childcare providers.

Tracking health data remains an integral activity for identifying health needs in Kansas. Phase Two of the re-engineering of the Vital Statistics Integrated Information System was completed last year. Currently, 90 percent of Kansas birthing facilities and 50 percent of Kansas funeral homes are using the web-based system. Phase Three, which will provide further enhancements to the system, is in development.

Although major accomplishments were made in 2006, there is more work to be done as we strive to make Kansas the healthiest state in the nation.



# Division of Environment

The Division of Environment's mission is to protect public health and the Kansas environment. Five bureaus within the division implement regulatory programs to limit exposure to material potentially harmful to the environment, assess environmental conditions within the state and remediate contamination when it is found.

Division staff completed the initial round of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) evaluations after eight years of work as required by a 1998 federal court decree. This process examined impaired waters in each of Kansas' 12 river basins using innovative approaches that merge hydrology with extensive water quality data. Through this process, we now have a better understanding of current stream quality, when impairments are expected to occur and steps needed to mitigate or eliminate the impairment. An agreement has been reached to close the decree early next year, making Kansas one of the first states to complete this obligation. As required by the Clean Water Act, we will periodically repeat the TMDL process for the waters of the state.

We have also implemented a water quality surveillance initiative known as the Stream Probabilistic Monitoring Program. Each year, we will obtain physicochemical and biological data from approximately 50 randomly selected stream segments across Kansas. The data will allow us to evaluate the state's overall compliance with water quality regulations.

An agency investigation identified over 270,000 cubic yards of highly contaminated smelter waste, slag, soil and sediment at a 135-acre site at the eastern edge of Galena. After months of negotiations between KDHE, EPA, the Department of Justice and the responsible party, a settlement of approximately \$7 million was agreed upon. This amount is sufficient to address contamination at the Galena site and two smaller sites in other southeastern Kansas locations.

This summer we revisited a site initially addressed in 1990. Sixteen years later, an inspector found additional containers of

pesticides, including Agent Orange, that belonged to the same aerial applicator that was responsible for the earlier cleanup. The business had closed years earlier, but the containers of the hazardous materials were left behind and were leaking. With our oversight, the materials were identified, removed and disposed of properly.

There were many reasons to celebrate our environment in 2006. Air pollution from regulated sources was reduced by 2.73 percent across the state, while non-regulated air pollution dropped by 3.38 percent. It was the third consecutive year that overall air pollution dropped by at least 3 percent and all areas of the state are in compliance with air quality standards.

Radiation and asbestos exposures also declined in 2006. There were no incidents of radiation exposure above the recommended limits within the state and less than 2 percent of asbestos exposures were above the recommended limit. In addition, a recent national performance evaluation of the Radiation Program resulted in the best designation attainable by a state.

Keeping potentially hazardous materials from reaching the environment is, of course, the best-case scenario. We also encourage reuse of materials to the

maximum extent possible. In 2006, we kicked off our ***Get Caught Recycling*** initiative to encourage public participation in recycling. We awarded \$1.5 million in grants for

projects related to recycling, composting, household hazardous waste collection and waste tire recycling. We also provided technical training to more than 500 hazardous waste generating facilities, landfill operators and household hazardous waste facility operators.

Every year, Kansans are becoming more sensitive to the impact each of us has on our environment. With this awareness comes better understanding of what we can do to help reduce that impact. Together, we can make Kansas a great place to live for generations to come.

During 2006, we successfully met both short and long-term challenges in implementing our mission of protecting the public health and environment.

Infrastructure to serve the needs of Kansans is a major concern. The aging of our wastewater and public water supply systems requires efforts to upgrade and replace portions approaching the end of the useful lifespan. In 2006, the division made \$94 million in loans to 37 communities for wastewater and public water supply projects. In addition, we worked to remediate contaminated water in 28 public water supply wells serving more than 150,000 people.

We, in conjunction with partners in local, state and federal agencies as well as organizations and private citizens, have completed the first year of the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy, or WRAPS, program. This program is designed to assist local groups in coming together to identify issues in a watershed, and develop and implement local solutions to address those issues.

We have begun a process to reduce airborne regional haze. A new cooperative regional haze program requiring commitments and work by major emission sources and others is underway.

Monitoring and planning are major components of our successful programs. In order to better characterize the amount of solid waste generated, recycled and disposed in Kansas, we are encouraging the use of measurements using pounds landfilled per person, per day. This metric acknowledges that diversion to other uses, as well as waste reduction efforts, have positive effects.

The legacy of past practices often is residual damage to the natural resources of Kansas. Practices such as the use of organic solvents as fumigants, industrial solvents for manufacturing, mining of coal and metals and inappropriate disposal of wastes has left areas of significant contamination. We were able to address contamination at a number of sites as well as develop natural resource damage assessments for some of these legacy sites.

One of the strengths of the Division of Environment is our capable and dedicated staff. Their efforts in all of our programs go above and beyond expectations. They are the reason for our success.

**- Dr. Ronald Hammerschmidt**  
**Director, Division of Environment**







The Division of Health and Environmental Laboratories (DHEL) provides analysis support for KDHE health and environmental

programs. Laboratory scientists and program staff coordinate activities to ensure the mission of the agency is achieved. Current technology and in-house innovation are used to minimize the time required to provide data and enhance service.

The emergence of molecular biological test methods has influenced the operation of public health laboratories. Traditional test procedures are being supplemented by rapid screening tests that can reduce the time required for identification of disease-causing organisms.

DHEL is a member of the CDC Laboratory Response Network (LRN). This network of state and federal laboratories provides surveillance data for the detection of disease outbreaks and potential terrorist threats. DHEL has capabilities for detecting biological, chemical and radiological substances that may be potential weapons for terror.

Federal funding that was provided for terrorism preparedness has also yielded capabilities for rapid detection of disease outbreaks or accidental chemical exposure. A team of biologists and chemists is cross-trained to maximize capabilities and capacity to respond to potential challenges. Process improvement teams help optimize efficiency and productivity.

The laboratory staff is a part of a regional and national network of scientists providing testing services and communication of results to protect the health of all Kansans.

**- Dr. Duane Boline**  
**Director, Division of Health and Environmental Laboratories**

# Division of Health and Environmental Laboratories

The Division of Health and Environmental Laboratories (DHEL) provides clinical and environmental testing in support of KDHE programs. During the past year, more than 40,000 newborns were screened for genetic disorders. The laboratory detected 39 infants with congenital hypothyroidism, 25 confirmed cases of sickle cell disease, three PKU and one galactosemia case. For newborns with these conditions, early detection and treatment is essential for preventing mental retardation or possibly even death.

The public health laboratory provides diagnostic microbiology, parasitology, virology and serology testing for disease-causing organisms. This information is provided to the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology for the protection of the health of Kansans.

The laboratory provides support for influenza surveillance through cell culture and real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assays. These activities could detect pandemic influenza viruses if they emerge. These procedures and serological tests were used for testing specimens for mumps during the past year. The laboratory has implemented real-time PCR assays that detect vaccine-preventable infectious agents such as bordetella pertussis. We have also implemented molecular test methods that rapidly detect pathogens that can lead to infertility in women if treatment is not given soon after the initial infection.

Over 3,500 specimens were tested for tuberculosis (TB), with 40 patients identified as having TB, and 340 with other infections. The laboratory has participated in evaluation of a rapid high performance liquid chromatography identification method for mycobacteria, and is one of five states selected by CDC to participate in a validation study of campylobacter identification using a PCR

test. The capacity for bacterial DNA fingerprinting has been increased and Kansas is an active participant in the PulseNet program. The program allows food-related disease outbreaks to be rapidly identified and correlated with similar events nationwide. In 2006, 1,100 specimens were analyzed, and more than 500 were positive for gastrointestinal bacterial infection.

The number of specimens screened for the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program has increased over five-fold during the last three years to more than 15,000 children tested in 2006. The methodology developed by DHEL was presented at a national meeting and is being adopted by other states.

Over 1,000 public drinking water supply systems are sampled and tested annually for bacterial contamination, chemical contaminants and radioactive substances. The quality of water in Kansas streams and reservoirs is monitored routinely. Samples are tested for organic and inorganic contaminants that could pose a threat to human health or aquatic organisms. More than 1,000 additional samples were analyzed in support of the use attainability study.

The laboratory maintains readiness for a biological, chemical or radiological emergency due to terrorist or accidental release of infectious or toxic substances.

In addition to testing services, DHEL provides certification for clinical and environmental laboratories to ensure testing is performed in accordance with currently accepted laboratory practices.

DHEL provides support for the Breath Alcohol Program. Training and certification are provided for law enforcement officers. The program provides breath testing instruments and calibration standards to law enforcement agencies. Annual inspection and certification is required for each instrument.





# Excellence In Service

**Protecting the health and environment of all Kansans  
by promoting responsible choices - *Our Mission***



**Healthy Kansans living in safe and sustainable environments - *Our Vision***



## Our Focus Areas

Leadership  
Culture of Excellence  
Consistent Presence  
Workforce Competency  
Secure Funding

KDHE is actively engaged in strategic planning. During 2006, agency leadership developed the KDHE Strategic Plan, titled Excellence In Service, or EIS. EIS uses the Balanced Scorecard approach to strategic planning, and strategy is an integrated component. It translates mission into actions and actions into outcomes. The KDHE strategy focuses on creating a vibrant, stable, and respected organization that can respond, anticipate and provide leadership on public health and environment issues for customers.

## Serve Our Customers

Improve Public & Environmental Health Outcomes  
Customer Focused

## Secure Our Resources

Be Responsible Stewards  
Protect the Public Trust

## Manage Our Processes

Create Agency Alignment  
Demonstrate Performance  
Optimize Communication  
Execute Core Activities

## Learn & Grow

Promote Agency Values  
Promote Innovation  
Maintain a Competent, Adaptive Workforce

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# PANDEMIC FLU EDUCATION



In 2006, KDHE conducted numerous multimedia educational campaigns. One of the most engaging was the *Don't Let Flu Bug U* campaign that focused on reducing the impact of seasonal flu in Kansas while at the same time, educating Kansans about pandemic flu. Since the spread of the flu is what causes a pandemic, educating people on how to prevent spreading the flu is a simple first step.

The campaign featured a multimedia blitz to promote four key messages – get a flu shot, cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often and stay home if you are sick. These messages were highlighted through newspaper, radio, television and Web site advertising.

In May, KDHE joined with Governor Sebelius in hosting the Kansas Pandemic Flu Summit. The summit featured U.S. Department of Human Services Deputy Secretary Alex Azar and focused on state and federal cooperation in response to pandemic flu.

Dr. Howard Rodenberg and Dr. Gail Hansen conducted pandemic flu public forums in Colby, Concordia, Hutchinson, Liberal, Pratt, Emporia, Leavenworth and Junction City to inform Kansans of the potential impact of a flu pandemic. They also visited health departments in 18 counties and met with local officials to answer questions about pandemic flu.

In December, KDHE and several partners hosted a free flu shot clinic for state employees at seven locations throughout the state. Nearly 2,400 state employees were vaccinated during the two-day event.

Ongoing efforts include spreading the word of flu prevention in elementary schools across the state. Animated videos and other educational materials are currently being produced for kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and for 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. They will be distributed to all school districts to be used as tools to educate students and children about flu prevention.



## It's flu season again.

This year, don't let the **Flu Bug U**. Come by your local health department and get a flu shot. There is flu vaccine available this year. Follow these tips and you will get through this flu season with a **high degree** of success:

- Wash Your Hands Often
- Stay Home if You Are Sick
- Cover Your Coughs and Sneezes to limit the spread of germs
- Get a Flu Shot- Vaccine is available this year

For more information, contact your local health department.



This ad brought to you by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment.



## BE A GERM STOPPER AT SCHOOL & HOME.

Clean your hands a lot with soap and water! Wash long enough to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.



**Stop germs. And stop colds and flu.**

[www.cdc.gov/germstopper](http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper)



**He's sending his best students to make you sick with the Flu.**

**Enroll in our class today!**

